

Message from the Chief

Chief's Memo – January 20, 2006

First, I want to thank CDF Firefighters Executive Board for the welcome reception last Tuesday evening. My wife, Judy, and I were truly honored by the hospitality of CDF Firefighters. It was also a great opportunity for my entire executive staff to meet CDF Firefighters union representatives from throughout the state.



I do look forward to meeting all CDF employees. I encourage you all to drop by and see me whenever you are in Sacramento or I am in your area. I do publish my public speaking and meeting schedule on-line.

<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/pdf/firemarshal/ChiefGrijalvpublicmeeting.pdf>

I provided two PowerPoint presentations and discussed my expectations of CDF managers and supervisors and what they can expect from me at my first briefing a few weeks ago. I was recently asked about these by rank and file personnel. The expectations apply equally to all personnel and to me. The PowerPoints can be downloaded at: <http://webmain1/Newsletters/supervisors.ppt> and http://webmain1/Newsletters/cdf_managers.ppt. Feel free to share them with anyone. I hope to present them on DVD sometime in the future.

I continue to identify and work with CDF executive staff, union leadership, and other stakeholders on the many important issues we face and develop priorities and strategies for addressing them. I will also continue to discuss them in this weekly memo as we make progress. Key among them to this point include; relationship building, customer satisfaction, consensus building, base budget deficit, Schedule A issues, Amador policy, and inversion and leadership impacts.

Chief Ken Pimlott has now added an update link for status updates on the progress of the Amador Program.

http://cdfweb/Newsletters/Amador%20Program_1_18_06.pdf

Next week I will be in Riverside County for most of the week to meet with the Unit Chief and staff, the County Executive Officer, the County Board of Supervisors, CDF Firefighters, and to tour Hemet-Ryan and March Air Base.

Regards,



Ruben Grijalva, Chief
Acting Director

CDF Unit Visits

Last week I visited the CDF San Marcos Fire Station. I enjoyed meeting the on-duty personnel and taking the walk down “memory lane.” The station was built in 1938 and remains as a little bit of history in the middle of progressive growth. As an update, the relocation project was initially funded in 1999, with a \$222K appropriation, for site selection and acquisition. Due to difficulties encountered selecting a site and inadequate funding, this phase of the project was refunded and restarted in 2001. The acquisition phase was completed within this budget with the acquiring of a 5.8-acre site with 1.5 of the acres being utilized for the forest fire station project. It is anticipated that construction will begin in March of this year; with completion anticipated in 12-months.



Dispatcher Gloria White, Chief Grijalva, Fire Captain Chris Hess, and ECC Chief Tom Gardner

Last week I also visited CDF San Diego Unit and toured the MVU ECC. I also observed a water rescue class in progress and met many firefighters from the Unit. I spent time discussing operational and funding issues with Unit Chief Chuck Maner. There is a recurring theme as I talk with the Unit Chiefs that are having difficulty with base budget issues. I will be taking CDF Management Services staff with me on future visits and eventually Department of Finance staff. The base budget structural issues will be an educational process for me, CDF budget staff, and the Department of Finance.

Training Academy

Basic Fire Control - Firefighter Academy (six weeks) started on Monday Jan. 9. There are 40 students in the class.

S-430 Operations Section Chief "ALL RISK" was held at the Academy January 9-12. Twenty-six students completed the class.

The JAC Grant requests from the units have arrived at the Academy and the meeting for review and approval is scheduled for January 25.

Following a meeting last week with San Joaquin Delta College, CDF is in the process of developing an agreement with the college to receive college credit for all students attending the Academy.

Operations

There will be a statewide ECC Chiefs meeting held during the California Chapter of the Emergency Number Association (CAL-NENA) convention on Monday January 22, 2006, from 1030 to 1700. There are many issues to be covered from Dispatcher Clerk positions to ROSS and CAD. Please contact Chief Kevin Olson for the agenda if you have not received one.

In response to the severe winter storms that hit California in late December through early January, CDF provided support to local governments and Department of Water Resources to help mitigate flood damage. CDF responded to 94 requests for crews, 14 for equipment and 62 overhead requests. Currently we still have four crews and four overhead still committed.

The Resource Ordering and Statusing System (ROSS) Working Team met last week. They have a very aggressive schedule for ROSS implementation. They are hoping to implement in April, but there are many tasks that need to be completed prior to an official implementation. One of the most important tasks is the data entry of all resources into ROSS. The Working Team is setting up a plan to assist CDF Units to get the entry completed.

State Fire Marshal

The State Fire Marshal's Pipeline Safety annual conference is scheduled for March 22 in Bakersfield. Those interested in further information are encouraged to contact Kathy Battles in the Pipeline Safety Division at (916) 445-8477.

The State Fire Marshal's Pipeline Safety Division and State Training Division are currently working with the National Association of State Fire Marshal's to schedule a Statewide Pipeline Safety Conference for the end of April in the San Luis Obispo area.

For efficiency and cost effectiveness, field Deputy State Fire Marshals will be relocating into CDF offices. DSFM III Hans Henneberque will be relocating to the Santa Rosa CDF Headquarters and Deputy State Fire Marshal Bill Robertson will be relocating to the Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit.

I will be putting an advisory committee together soon to look at improving the integration of OSFM into CDF.

Resource Management

After a briefing from Jackson Demonstration State Forest-CDF staff, the North Coast Water Quality Control Board staff has committed to a timely review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

The Professional Foresters Examining Committee (PFEC) has concluded their review relative to Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) filing issues and will move forward with recommendations to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF). The PFEC review was focused on THP return letter content, processes and pitfalls.

The 2006 Forest Practice rulebooks are at the printers and will be available for distribution by the end of January. Dennis Hall, staff chief, Forest Practice, is still keeping the color of the cover a secret.

CDF has entered into a contract utilizing federal funding to support evaluation of opportunities to expand utilization of small wood products. While the initial efforts will focus on dealing with what to do with materials generated by fuel treatment in Southern California, we anticipate that this additional focus will have statewide benefit.

Cooperative Fire, Training and Safety

Staff is working with FEMA and OES to recover a portion of CDF's costs associated with the response to the December 2005 and January 2006 flood incidents.

The California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA) working group will be meeting on January 19 and 20 to continue working on the rewrite/update of the agreement.

The Association of Contract Counties and CDF met on January 19 in Ventura County. Currently, the relationship is very positive and further demonstrates our partnership with local government. One topic of discussion was "Lessons Learned from the Topanga Fire".

The FY 06/07 Wildland Rate letter is currently being developed and should be released to the field shortly.

An Amador Program Task Force comprised of Unit, Region and Sacramento program staff are continuing to develop recommendations for implementing the new Amador policy and legislation. The status of the Amador Program revision has been posted to the CDF Intranet and will be updated periodically.

Cooperative Fire and Management Services Program staff is working to revise the Schedule A Administrative Fee description with input from CDF Firefighters. A draft will be available within the next few weeks.

The statewide camps meeting is scheduled for February 1- 2 in Sacramento.

Communications

CDF-Television

The Discovery Channel's three-part series titled "Into the Firestorm" continues each Tuesday January 24 & 31, 2006. Check your local listing for your airtime. Each episode will feature Forest Service Smokejumpers, Hotshots and the CDF San Diego Unit Helitack crew as they respond to incidents throughout the 2005 season. CDF personnel are featured in all three episodes.